# Memo

To:

Jeff Strand

From:

Bob

Date:

7/25/2007

Re:

Models of participatory

Per your request I am providing you with information about Archon Fung, Ph.D., Professor of Public Policy, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

Professor Fung spent over 10 years researching and comparing models of participatory government throughout the world. Below is a brief description of his project.

# **Empowered Participation**

Empowered Partcipation is a notion of popular government in which ordinary people exercise active voice over important decisions that affect them. Unlike most kinds of citizen action such as voting, petitioning representatives, or giving money to special interest groups, what ordinary individuals say in empowered participation make real differences in what government does. That is why we call it "empowered."

Unlike like much politics that is centrally concerned with amassing enough power, money, or votes to dominate those who disagree, decision-making most often involves figuring out how to solve complex problems in ways that all can accept through discussion, debate, and collaborative exploration. That is why we call it "deliberative."

One basic idea of empowered participation is local control. Since those closest to the action--such as teachers, parents, and principals in schools; police officers and neighborhood residents; factory workers and those who live near factories; slum dwellers and villagers in developing states--often know the most about the problems they face and how best to fix them, they should have the authority to develop and enact solutions.

But local action is often not enough. Bad luck, tough circumstances, lack of know-how, or ill-will may render local actions ineffective or unfair. Therefore, a second basic notion is that central power can remedy these problems through training, technical assistance, sharing innovations and lessons, making outcomes and operations transparent to facilitate public pressure and support, and by directly holding local units accountable for doing their best.

Professor Fung has offered to come to Minneapolis to present his findings and comparative models to the Community Engagement Task Force if they invite him to present. Discuss your thoughts with the group and let me know if I can help provide any additional information to the group on comparative models.

# Archon Fung - Ph.D., Associate Professor of Public Policy, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University...

# Participation and Deliberation in Democratic Governance

His research and teaching aim to understand whether and how participation and deliberation can make contemporary public governance more fair and effective. On this site, you can take a look at what innovative citizens, officials, and activists are doing to improve public education, policing, the condition of the environment, and even the lives of workers in sweatshops in America and abroad. These projects enable ordinary people get involved in the affairs of state. Government, big or small, Democrat or Republican (or even Communist and Worker's parties in developing countries like Brazil and India), just isn't going to work very well for them unless they do.

These ideas of participation and deliberation seem straightforward, but they are complex, even daunting, in both theory and practice. But when citizens and leaders figure out how to practice democracy effectively in their own corners of social and political life, democracy pays off like nothing else can.

#### Books

## <u>Democracy at Risk: How Political Choices Undermine Citizen Participation and What We</u> Can Do About It

"Democracy at Risk is an... impressive collaboration of which political scientists can be proud, this book should be of interest to all who care about the state of citizenship, and what may be done to improve it." Theda Skocpol, Harvard University

(Brookings Institution Press, 2005).

# **Empowered Participation: Reinventing Urban Democracy**

"Fung rediscovers the best traditions of American self-government... in a book bristling with insight... that should be required reading for every student, scholar, and citizen of Democracy." Lani Guinier, Harvard University.

(Princeton University Press, 2004). Check out the book on Amazon.Com.

# Deepening Democracy: Institutional Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance

"This is an inspirational political critique but at the same time a program for critical politics." Michael Burawoy, University of California, Berkeley

(With Erik Olink Wright) (Verso Press, 2003). Check out the book on Amazon.Com.

### Refereed Articles

"Democratic Theory and Political Science: A Pragmatic Method of Constructive Engagement" in *American Political Science Review* Vol. 101, No. 3 (forthcoming 2007, manuscript <u>available upon request</u>).

"Varieties of Participation in Complex Governance" in Public Administration Review, Vol. 66 (December 2006): 66-75.

"Empowered Participation in Minneapolis: The Neighborhood Revitalization Program" in International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, Vol. 30, No. 3 (September 2006): 638-55. With Elena Fagotto.

<u>"The Effectiveness of Regulatory Disclosure"</u> in *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2006): 155-181. With Elena Fagotto, Mary Graham, and David Weil.

"Deliberation Before the Revolution: Toward an Ethics of Deliberative Democracy in an Unjust World" in *Political Theory*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (Spring 2005).

"Radical Democracy" in Swiss Journal of Political Science, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Winter 2004). With Joshua Cohen.

"Recipes for Public Spheres: Eight Institutional Design Choices and Their Consequences" in Journal of Political Philosophy, Vol. 11, No. 3. (September 2003): 338-67.

"Associations and Democracy: Between Theories, Hopes, and Realities" in Annual Review of Sociology, Vol. 29, (2003): 515-39.

"Deliberative Democracy and International Labor Standards" in Governance, Vol. 16, No. 1 (January 2003).

"Deepening Democracy: Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance" in *Politics and Society*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (March 2001). With Erik Olin Wright.